THE CHRISTMAS CHEER.

How the Ancient Holiday Was Hallowed by Worship and Gladness.

CRIMES, CAROLS AND CAROUSALS

Stuffed Stockings, Stuffed Turkeys and Stuffed Stomachs.

THE FAMILY FEASTS.

The Cold, Bitter Blasts of Old Boreas Out of Boors and the Happy Hearts and Beaming Faces by the Hearths of Cosey Homes.

PIETY AND PLENTY.

A Universality of Good Feeling and Fraternal Pleasure.

RELIGIOUS RITES.

Grand and Solemn Services in the Christian Churches.

MEMORIAL MELODIES

Great Crowds of People Attending the Ce'ebrative Ceremonies.

THE BOUNTY OF BENEVOLENCE.

Children Made Merry and Glad and Gorged with Good Cheer at the Charitable Institutions.

THE SHEENY STEEL.

Gala-Day Skaters Thronging the Ice of the Central Park Lakes Yesterday in Thousands.

FUN AND FROLIC.

The Observance of the Festival on Long Island Staten Island, in New Jersey and Other Adjacent Localities.

It was the calm and silent night!
Seven hundred years and fitty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was queen of land and sea.
Rosound was heard of clashing wars—
Peace brooded over the hushed domain,
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars
Heid, undisturbed, their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

It is the caim and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out and throw
Their joyous peals abroad to smite.
The fall the solemn solemn below now!
The table the control to share he worn,
To ta happy name is given;
For in that stable lay, new-born,
The Peaceful Prince of earth and heaven
In the solemn midnight,
Centuries ago.

yesterday celebrated. So full is it of memories. as ociations and images of the past that it is almost impossible for the mind to grasp its full solemnity, grandeur and tenderness in a single ought. Over and over again has its history counted by great men and little, and neve has that wonderful story of the event which it commemorates, so quaintly told in the New Testament, been treated of with ridicule, even by the profahest of the schools of modern infidelity. This

segarding the mystery of the birth of Christ have had much to do with distinguishing the day above all others that come and go. But farther back even than the time of Constantine a similar festi-wal had been celebrated by various nations, in various and peculiar ways. The ceremonies were almost all different, but had nearly the same significance—that of joy and gratulation Some of them also expressed thankfulness and praise to some higher Power accepted as omnipogrew rapidly in strength and vigor, the heathenish rites were transferred to the commemoration of the modern redemption, and the traces of many of them can still be discovered in the ceremonies practised in different portions of the civilized globe. This establishes the fact that the day to hallowed by two kinds of associations—those which date back to the infancy of the race and those which have clustered around that one most romantic and tragical career in all human annals ludes the birth and death of Jesus of Mazareth. The first have their source in all that is genial, generous, tender and noble in the human he qualities of good followship and manshood. The second appeal strongly to our spirit-ual and sympathetic natures, and awe us in the manner that children are awed by a realistic and appailing representation of a Shakspearian tragedy upon the stage, subduing the shock of the bitter sorrows and calamities of the play with the soft and gentle tenderness of other incidents, and inspiring these millions of people, of the modern world, living and thinking eighteen centuries afterward, with pious love and reverence surpas sing the highest dreams of heroism ever formed

It is more fully, however, that Christmas is celebrated in its jovial and fraternal sense than in its seligious. Its memories of that character appeal more warmly to the heart than the inspired chronicles handed down to us, which a mighty host of savans have succeeded in investing in a sort of shadow of infidelity by their cavillings over their mysteries and miracles.

therefore, is more a season of merrymaking than of praise sounding. But it would not do, of course, for the priesthood to acknowledge or to remark this. The churches on this holiday, as they were yesterday, are always ornate with glistening green leaves and glowing red flowers and brilliant tapers Yet jointy always seems to overreach piety. In

set joility always seems to overreach piety. In the jingling words of an old song which is quoted from some remote source by Chambers,

So now is come our joyful'st feast;

Lat every man be jolly;
Each room with iyy leaves is drest
And every port with holly.
Though some churls at our mirth repine.
E-sand your forcheads garlands twine;
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,
And let us all be merry.

Let all the streets with schoos ring.

et all the streets with echoes ring; woods and hills and everything, Bear witness we are merry.

The sombre pews are always thronged, the services always grand, the music always magnificent and mellow and the discourses from the pulpits are always marked by labored eloquence. So the religious rates of the festival, beginning in the mid-

will be disappointed.

But still it is not every one whe sees plenty upon this day, or amemerative of the plentude of Divine love. Fell many a tale of keen agony and serrow might perchance be told of last night, when the bitter winds were howing like maddened furies around our doors and windows, while we sat by the warm, happy fireside. The institutions of charity, however, were yesterday crowded with the homeless, friendless and moneyless victims of poverty, who partock heartily of the good cheer that kind, Christian bands had set them; but

where the sea of trouble foams

And sorrow's billows rave,

Men in the wilderness of myriad homes

suffer and endure in silence, unknown and uncared for. And we, of the city too often forget the vandering banes of

NOMADIC BEGGARS

who lead errant lives through the country districts and have no habitation, and to whom no holiday brings cheer. They may stand by the roadside unknown and unfriended, and as, in a quaint and pathetic ballad of the yale tide—

The silent moonbeams on the drifted snow The silent moonbeams on the drifted snow
Shine cold and pale and blue,
While through the cottage-door the yule log's glow
Cast on the iced oak's trunk and gray rock's brow a
ruddy hue.

ruddy hue.

The red ray and the blue, distinct,
Like happy groom and bride,
With azured green and emerald orange glare,
Gilding the tolels from branches bare,
Lie side by side.

The door is open and the fire burns bright-

The door is open and the fire burns bright—
but the wanderer, depressed and sad, is, like a hopeless sinner, gazing from afar upon the entrance of heaven.

This is the saddening portion of the picture; but if you had looked in upon those farm houses yesterday that stand among the white-shrouded hills you might, perchance, have forgotten all thought of the misery without and have feasted upon joy.

The day dawaed with a glorious flood of golden sunlight pouring upon the earth and creeping with stealthy progress of love into all the crevices and crannies that it could reach in the stolid, unsympathetic architecture of our city. Yet the air was piercingly cold and the streets were nearly deserted. Still, so bright seemed the glow of the sun that indoors the festivities and joility, after the loy of the children at finding the loaded stockings, had somewhat subsided, went bravely forward, with no shadows to spoil their unalloyed happiness. The sweet belis pealed forth their

LAUGHING CHIMES, seeming like the silvery tongues of angels, chatting gladly, as they leaned over the earth out the criefies of the sky. Their melody never fell more softly, more tenderly, upon the ear, and never thrilled so upon the chords of the heart with its harmonnes of joy. In all places where children were gathered their clear and pleasant volces sounded sweetly in the Christmass carols, and it bright isces glowed with a sunshine, not borrowe, but all their own.

When the eventide came on a perfect quiet filled the city, the streets were still and a gentle glamour seemed to fill the sky. The day closed as tenderly as the rosy eyelids of a drowsy babe, and the night was starit, beautiful and cold. It reminded one of that eve of St. Agnes, when she prayed—

Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That on my boson lies.
And let that be the end of us all in The Sabbath of eternity,
One Sabbath, deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The bridegroom and his bride!

SERVICES IN THE CHURCHES.

ST. THOMAS' CHURCH.

The Sunrise Service for Children-Ex-quisite Music at the Service of the Holy

Yesterday was a day of quiet joy and plety at St. Thomas' church, corner Fifty-third street and Fifth avenue. A noble edifice, radiant with light, bright, happy faces, beaming with sunshine and good feeling, a vast chorus singing strains, sublime day. In this church the day was indeed the day of our Saviour's birth. Christmas breathed out of the fragrant wreaths with which the church was hung, Christmas sparkled in the eyes of the gally dressed children whose faces brightened with the expectation of plum pudding and the dainties of the Christmas tree.

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CHRISTMAS GLEAMED

through the oriel windows and seemed to be written on the marble and the stained glass. The scent of the flowers was sweeter than on ordinary days, the faces of the congregation were happier, the very atmosphere was made pleasanter by that happy sense of Christmas. This was the feeling of the congregation, which fully entered into the spirit of the glorious day.

At half-past seven in the morning there was sunrise service for the children. They came in large numbers, although the cold was piercing. They feasted their eyes upon the decorations. Wreaths and stars of holly, laurel and evergreen; flowers breathing perfume, crosses, green and fragrant, and Scriptural mottes made out of leaves, festoons drawn all over the walls—all made the church beautiful. Four large cedar trees were on the chancel and two juniper trees on the altar.

fragrant, and Scriptural motios made out of leaves, festoons drawn all over the walls.—all made the church beautiful. Four large cedar trees were on the chancel and two juniper trees on the altar. The chancel looked a perfect grove, and from one part of it the berries of the juniper trees glistened. The LEAVES OF HOLLY AND IVY were so bright and crisp that they reflected back the light, and so fresh were they that the dew seemed yet to be upon them. An immense cross of laurel, most beautiful to look at—it was embedded in fir trees—was in the back part of the chancel. The pulpit, the lectern and the organ loft were richly festooned with laurel and holly. Mottos, "Giory to God in the Highest," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," "The Word Was Made Flesh and Dwelt Among Us," "Prince of Peace" and others were on the walls. They were set in green leaves and wreathed in laurel.

The children, after having looked at the decorations, sang merry Christimas carols, Mr. George W. Warren playing the accompaniment on the organ. First the "Adeste Fidelea" was sung, then followed prayer by the Rev. W. F. Morgen, pastor of the church. The children sang also the forty-third hymn of the prayer book, "while shepherds watch their flocks by night." Their bright, clear voices, ringing merrily in the ears of their parents, formed a pleasing constrast ro THE DEEP, SONGBOUR TONES of the organ. One could not say which sounded

their socks by night." Their bright, clear voices, ringing merrily in the ears of their parents, formed a pleasing contrast

TO THE DEEP, SONOBOUS TONES

of the organ. One could not say which sounded betier, the insty, sharp voices of the children or the mighty music of the organ. The usual morning service at Christmas was held at eleven o'clock. The processional "Hosanna to King David's Son" by H. S. Cuth, was sung with much spirit. It is expressive of Christmas joy and Christmas cheer. After the reasing of the Paslms and of the lessons the "To Deum Laudamus" and "Jubliate Deo" (in F major), by Alfred N. Pease, was sung. The music is of a brilliant style. There are several solos, tries and quartets in this piece, and they were admirably vendered. The Introit from Handel's "Messiah" ("O Thou Tellest") is in Handel's severe style, but the expression of joy and cheerfulness is perfect. Calkins' "Kyrie Eleisam" and Zingareill's rapturous "Gloria Tibi", which must have been inspired on a Christmas night—foliswed. After an elequent sermon by the Rev. William F. Morgan, the choir sang Mosart's "Gloria in Excelsis," which made the very building ring with sublime echoes of a world full of hap piness and glory.

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH. Prayer by the Rev. Dr. Bellows and the Caristmas Sermon by the Rev. Henry

The Christmas services at the Church of the Messiah commenced yesterday at eleven A. M., and were well attended. The Rev. Dr. Bellows offered prayer, and the Christmas sermon was preached by the Rev. Henry Powers, from the text, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons o God, even to those that believe on His name,' taken from John L., 11, 12. The preacher commenced:-The reference in these words is, of of course, to Jesus Christ, our ever blessed Lord and Saviour, whose birth unto this world of ours, nearly nineteen centuries ago, we celebrate so joy fully to-day. And why? Because, as John expressed it, "In him was life, and life was the light of man," that true life-viz., "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"-and therefore

man that comoth into the work!"—and therefore we rejoiced to call ourselves His disciples and seek by every means in our power to make Him known unito our brethren.

"BY CAME UNTO HIS OWN."
not unto those simply who were living at the time of His adv..at, and who belonged to a particular race, epoch and locality in the history of the world; for the wants He came to satisfy, the unbelief He came to dispot, the sins He came to remove, the misery and death He came to put away, are such as have cursed mankind in every age and land. Humanity did not exist from the beginning for four hundred years and more without the presence in it of those elements and susceptibilities and necessities which were personally met and satisfied by Jesus when He came in the fiesh, and then, after an interruption of thirty years or thereabouts, retarned again to its former condition, to continue thus unchanged and unimproved for evermore. Mr. Powers then went on to describe Chatte mission on earth, and showed

the opposition he received from all quarters, and also explained how we should rejorce that we received our education in a Christian land. He said, "We are born into an atmosphere and conviction or steady growth of progress, so that here in New York, even at the beginning of our career, we expect to live by and by in a state of society which shall be far more helpful, refined, frustful and advantageous in every way than OUR PATREES AND GRANDPATREES lived in before us, and there is not a place in Christendem in which the same things are not taken for granted, while we Americana, a little more hepciul, and with good reason, doubtless, than all other peoples, expect that our cassus will be larger, that our ships of war will be feeter, our guns heavier, that our heloons and kites of every kind will fly higher and better than those which any other nation can fabricate; we expect that our fields will bear more corn, and that our shops will turn out more implements, our towns become more healthy and beautiful from year to year. The savage on the prairies, the Enquimaux, the South Sea Islander have no such aspirations as these, as they see the gradual decrease of their numbers in the daily struggle with civilization and Christianity.

Speaking of "the degree of confidence displace for district which exters between man and man."

tianity.

Speaking of "the degree of confidence displacing distrast which exists between man and man," the speaker said:—"i am ware that there are corners' occasionally on Wall street and "rings' at the City Hall, and ballot box stuffing more or less,

the City Hall, and ballot box stuming more or less, and

EVERY KIND OF CORRUPTION
in our municipal affairs. You leck your doors and windows when you go to bed at night, and I make fast my study here whenever I go out of it; but Ior all that faith in man as man is vastly more prevalent now than it once was, ere Jesus came and gave to us His own commandment to love one another. If a Christian merchant, you order your goods and remit the pay for them; by means of a long chain of causes whose links reach back and depend upon this Christian faith as its starting point, were you conducting business in the heart of Asia or Africa you would know of no such confidence as this and no such way for its expression, as the explorer Livingstone and his discoverer Stanley more recently have found to their cost. Instead, you would start from your home to buy your goods with your money on your person, and prepared to defend it against all comers, it needs be, by your own strong right arm, and returning with your merchandise on your camels or oxen you would sleep by them at night and know that they were safe only as long as you guarded them.

The Rev. Mr. Powers then concluded with a brief and lucid view of our condition hereafter and the difference of opinion appertaining thereto.

GRACE CHURCH.

A Large Congregation and a Fine Ser-vice—Some Plain Speaking About the Fire in Fourteenth Street—A Very Brief

ably well filled with a fashionable and well-dressed congregation. Every seat was occupied, and the were at their lower extremities blocked up with Christmastide worshippers. The service was, as usual at this church on the great holidays of the year, in exquisitely good taste, and what with its Yule decorations of evergreens and holly and flowers, and the bright dresses of the assembled congregation, he scene was quite brilliant and imposing. The pièce de résistance of the ceremony, however, was of course the music, and the authems and hymns were admirably rendered. At the close of the

of course the music, and the authems and hymns were admirably rendered. At the close of the prayers Dr. Potter, in the course of his usual notices of church meetings, alluded to THE DESTRUCTION OF GRACE CHAPEL. In terms of strong indignation. He said that he could not but regard the conduct of the proprietors of Barnum's Museum as guity of what he could only call an act of incendiarism. More than a month ago the civil authorities had warned them that their premises were a source of danger to the surrounding property, and yet nothing had been done to remedy the evil. Things in this city had, indeed, reached a deplorable pass when such wanton and flagrant disregard of the rights and lives and preperty of citizens was tolerated. One of these fine days, perhaps, when hall New York found tiself in the street.

HOMELESS AND UNSHELTERED, a reform would be instituted. It was clear that the inspector of Public Buildings and the Superintendent of the Fire Department should have power to compel proprietors to protect themselves and others against loss and ruin.

Dr. Potter's sermon was of the briefest, taking less than ten minutes in its delivery. Its point, however, was very seasonable and appropriate. This was the fact that Christmas, the birthday of Christ, was the children's festival above all else, and that it was our especial duty at this happy season to provide for the comfort and the happiness of the httle ones.

THE GREAT FEATURE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING was that the constantly urged us to cultivate the spirit of children. Obedience was greater than achievement, and the performance of duty more sublime than the indulgence of will. And we could not do better than resolve now to imitate the trustful disposition and the confidence in the royal law of love which marked the child.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN.

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Christmas Services, Music and Sermon. The Christmas services at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin were held with very impressive ceremonies yesterday. The congregation present was quite large, and the church walls and altar were astefully decorated with evergreen wreaths and symbolical banners. The procession of choristers entered the church at a few minutes past eleven singing the customary psalm. Rev. Mr. Noyes, the officiating celebrant, intoned the Lord's Prayer, Collects and Ten Commandments with responses Collects and Ten Commandments with responses with "Kyrie." Then followed in succession the reading of the epistle, the creed and a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Brown, rector of the church, on the subject of the incarnation. The ceremonies continued with the Offertory, confession, absolution, prayer, sursum corda (or words of comfort), "Sanctus," the humble petition, the consecration, the distributing of bread and wine at the communion table, the cleansing of the holy vessels and the benediction of the post-communion. The music was very impressive, consisting of You Weber's Mass in G, Krispin's "Ave Maria," the "Gloria in Excelsie," and Rossini's "Tantum Ergo." Mr. Prentiss is the organist of the church and Mrs. Robinson the soprano.

ST. IGNATIUS' OHUBOH.

Nimeteenth Century Civilization a Cheat—Christ the Only Hope and Joy of Mankind—Sermon by Rev. Dr. Ewer. The pials and simple Reformed Dutchmen, who a

year or two ago worshipped in the plain and un-pretending temple on Fortieth street, near Sixth avenue, would hardly knew their old religious homestead as it appeared yesterday, decked with crosses and evergreens and pictures, and its altar lighted with half a hundred candles and gas jets. At high mass, as the half-past ten o'clock A. M. service is technically termed, a procession of eleven ooys and seven men entered from the vestry room, or sacristy, and made half the circuit of the church. The first boy carried a long stick in his hand, on chanted a Christmas carol, whose burden was that they were Christian soldiers and were bearing the cross of Jesus. The service was performed by an

they were Christian soldiers and were bearing the cross of Jesus. The service was performed by an assistant priest. The ante-communion service was comparatively brief, and, before the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper or the mass, Dr. Ewer preached a sermion on the text, "Good tidings of great Joy," Luke it., 10. The first and only source of Joy since the expuision from Eden, he said, was now announced. What is Joy? he asked, and then proceeded to define it as a spiritual emotion and satisfaction. He had spoken, he said, for a few weeks past to his people on some of THE DEVICES OF SATAN, and to-day in the presence of the manger he would speak of another device. The devil would persuade the world that car civilization has made the world better, but he (Dr. Ewer) denied it. The comforts of life though accompanying Christianity are not the cause of it. The civilization of the nineteenth century, what is it? Our telegraphs and railroads and printing presses and the general progress of terrestail science have not produced one particle of comfort to the human race. This is the cheat. Love, peace, chastity, &c.—these don't grow with the growth of our civilization. Wealth increases and Satan persuades us that we are better of. But the richgrow richer and the poor poorer. The large railroads swallow up the small ones; the large stores eat up the smaller, and while we are deceiving ourselves the red flag of the Commune waves in our great cities. If you want to see what is coming you need only look to Paris. If you want to know what shall triumph here in the next century look across the water. Make way for it. Many hope in some other way, and wealth beckons on to power, but it is uscless to think we can escape the incoming flood. "Give us schools," cries Henry Ward Beecher. "and we will have less crime." But cultured intellect only makes the bad man the worse criminal. What a wicked man wants is Christ. Without Him evil becomes more malignant iniquity. Why is it that there is no real augmentation of hum

tation of human happiness? Because all its forms are

TYPES OF FALLEY HUMANITY,
in which the descendants of Adam have built and reared their joys. Born in the image of the fallen Adam, how can he escape this? And thus is there a perpetual propagation of misery among men. It is, therefore, impossible that the stream should rise higher than its source. He the Doctory would not say a word against schools or telegraphs or science of any sort. But civilization is not the cause of sin. It is a gift of God, and we cannot affect it by one hair's weight. It is the wicked heart of man that grows beastly and proud with civilization. Build up your brown stone houses, throw open your juccums to the Tyndais, multiply your schools and colleges, still murders will not stop, robberies will not cease and lesser crimes will not decrease. In Christ alone can man find true happiness and joy, for in Him were not only light and life, but from Him must flow forth true

joy; for in Him this life is destined to grow better. Without ceasing to be one with the Father he became one with us. God, as it were, lies after man, to call him from sin and to save him from perdition. The old Adam's frame is sin and misery; the new is joy and happiness. Our nature must look in the outset at civilization, and everything must be brought into subjection to Christ, and to him alone shall we pay our vows through our mother the Church. The one great miracle has come—God is man and man is God.

we pay our vows through our mother the Church. The one great miracle has come—God is man and man is God.

The Doctor lituatrated how, through baptism, confirmation, ordination, the preaching of the Gospel, the sacraments and BACKIPICE OF THE ALTAR, the world is to be made holy and pure and good. At the close of the sermon the Lord's supper was administered to about a score of women, but no man partock thereof save the priests. The first communion service was continued until nearly one o'clock, when the altar boys and priests returned to the vestry, chanting as they went. When Dr. Ewer entered the pulpit he publicly made the sign of the cross on his breast and forchead and distinctly uttered the usual invocation—'in the the name of the Father," &c. Very many of the audience also bowed the head and the knee not only at the name of Jesus, but at remete references in the prayers to His incarnation. Some few persons prostrated themselves as well as they could in their pews. And this is Protestantism.

CHURCH OF ST. VINCENT FERRER.

Christmas Among the Dominicans-A Musical Festival by the Philharmonice and a Beautiful Sermon by the Rev. Father Meagher.

bligation is the first commandment of the Catholic Church, and it is one of the best observed of any of the commandments of any Church. The intensely cold weather of yesterday contributed to anything but the diminution of the attendance at last mass at the Dominican church of St. Vincent Ferrer, Sixty-sitxh street and Lexington avenue, of which the Rev. Father Lilly is pastor. Among the worshippers who filled every available seat and crowded along the aisles, the vestibule and even up into the organ loft, were a great many strangers from other parishes of this and the neighquite a large delegation, including General Swee-ney and other distinguished Catholic gentlemen. mon from the great Dominican preacher, Father

convenient to put in an appearance, being at present in Nashville, Tenn.; but those who atpresent in Nashville, Tenn.; but those who attended that mass specially to hear him lost nothing by his absence, for they were most pleasantly disappointed at finding the pulpit filled by quite as able, though less famous, a Dominican brother, the Rev. Father Meagher, attached to the church of St. Vincent Ferrer, who well sustained the equally well-deserved reputation which his order enjoys as "The Urder of the Preachers."

Father Meagher, who is a man of fine proportions and handsome features, ascended the pulpit after the first gospel, and, having read the gospel of the day and its beautiful story of the Saviour's birth, proceeded to show the condition of the world at

birth, proceeded to show the condition of the world at

THE ADVENT OF CHEIST.

To all outward appearance the world was in a state of grandeur and magnificence approaching to absolute perfection; the arts and sciences flourished to a degree that gave little hope of there being any parallel for it in after ages; but all underneath was depravity and corruption. No time more ripe for the coming of the Redeemer could possibly have been selected. His very birth and the manner and surroundings thereof was a grand rebuke to the ideas which then prevailed. If anybody had heard of the birth of a new king, not of an earthly king dom, but of the principalities of the entire universe, that miserable stable at Bethlehem was the last place in the world one would think of going to look for the infant monarch; yet that stable and its humble surroundings better became the dignity of a Ged and a Redeemer of mankind than would the most gorgeous palace ever reared by man's art and labor. He came principally to correct the three great evils which then prevailed, and which St. John called the lust of the fesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of line. Father Meagher wound up his splendid discourse with an eloquent peroration.

THE SEAUTIFUL GRUECH

wound up his splendid discourse with an eloquent peroration.

Was magnificently decorated with festoons of evergreens, &c., the elegant little crib containing a wax image of the infant Christ attracting general attention. The music approached the reporter'sidea of the celestial harmonics. It came from a double quartet choir—Miss L. Morrison-Fiset, soprano solo; Miss M. Tracy, alto; Messrs. Frenzell and Ott, tenors; Messrs. Sullivan and Marshall, bassos. The organ, under Professor C. H. Hanschel, was reinforced by the splendid orchestra of the Philharmonic Society, brass instruments, drums and all conducted by Felix Leifels. Haydn's imperial Mass (No. 3) was magnificently rendered throughout, with Lamblidtet's "Christmas Anthem" and Gounod's "Ave Maria," by Miss Morrison-Fiset. The vionis solo, with orchestral accompaniment, by Mr. Frank Danly, was much to be admired, and his performance of the "Adagio," par Rode, was almost a musical wonder. The congregation separated with "Merry Christmas" on every face. It ought to be added that at the morning mass, at half-past five o'clock, all the conveniences for illuminating the church were employed with a most brilliant and highly devotional effect.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH.

Grand Mass Yesterday-Music and Decerations-Sermon by the Rev. Father

The Church of St. Peter. in Barclay street, holds prominent place among the sacred edifices in this city by reason of the old-time associations which congregate around it. When New York was in its infancy St. Peter's was generally regarded as a magnificent structure, and those who loved the building in their youthful days cling to it with the same tenacity and tenderness in old age as circling tvy does to the hoary oak. Christin Day is always rigidly observed in this church, and the manner in which the interior of the grand old structure was decorated testified that no luke-warmness exists among its congregation. The

was respiendent with choice flowers, of multifa-rious hues, which diffused an exquisite odor. The reredos was embowered in graceful firs; the galle-ries were festooned with evergreens, and spiral wreaths twined around the piliars. Soon after the doors were opened devotees poured into the church, filling the nave, asise and galleries, until

tenor, M. Fritach, was well worthy of commendation. Mrs. Easton's solo in "Agnus Dei" was superb, and the "Adeste Fideles" quartet brought
into play the

SWEET VOICES

of other talented members of the choir. The alto
of Miss Tobin is particularly clear and dulcet, and
her solo at St. Feter's yesterday stamps her as a
vocalist of no mean pretension. The chorus was
well selected and the organist, Mr. W. F. Pecher,
descrives much praise for the masterly manner in
which adorns the rood loit.

The sermou was preached by the Rev. Father
Quinn, paster of the church, and was specially
notable for its simple pathos and appropriatness.
The learned divine opened his discourse by reference to the featival of Christmas and the masiloid
blessings which the birth of Christ had conferred
upon all mankind, and assigning that as a reason
why it should be

A SEASON OF JOY

and gladness. For four thousand years after Adam
was driven out of Paradise man was separated by
evil from God and happiness. The birth of our
Saviour brought back that peace our primal
father lost for poor humanity, reconciled us unto
God and gave us positive proof of our redemption. The promises God made to the patriarchs at
various eras, as recorded in Holy Writ, that He
would send upon earth one who would redeem all
men from sin, were fulfilled when Christ was born.
The lowliness of the surroundings of the birth of
our Saviour teatifies especially God's love for man.
He did not send His Son to us in panoply and
spiendor; in His almignty wisdom He deemed
it best to send His only begotton Son
to us in meckness and poverty. Although
the blessed Virgin was of the royal House of David
the holy isamily were in humble circumstances; so
poor, in fact, that accommodation at the line at
Bethlehem could not be accorded, and the Redeemer of mankind was

SORN IN A STABLE,
wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. It was probably the humbleness of Christ's
birth that caused the Jews to regard Him with disfavor and persecute Him during His sojourn u

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE.

Imposing Services Vesterday Morning-The Gregorian Musical Service-Sermon by Rev. August M. Brady. The high mass at this church yesterday was im-

singly grand. On the alter, which is a very ge one, shence thousand lighted tapers, whose ilded candelabrums which supported them. The gilded candelabrums which supported them. The altar and the pillars were festooned with greens, which contrasted quite pleasantly with the lights and tended to seften the bold gorgeouaness of the other altar ornaments. The music, which is unlike that of any other church in the city, was fine, notwithstanding its monotony. The Paulist's choir is composed of male voices only, and, in the absence of an organ loft, the chorists sit on either side of the altar and are habited in cassocks and surplices, which arrangement adds highly to the effect of the impressive ritualism of the Roman service. Besides this innovation on general wages, classical music—which is often converted into opera bouge by amateur cholrs—is dispensed with and THE GREGGRIAN ERVICE is chanted. The music of the service is in slow time and very impressive. The voices are not arranged in the sets—soprano, alto and basso—but in graduated grades, from the feeble soprano to the thundering bass. The weak voices begin the chant, and as it progresses the other voices imperceptibly chime in, until at last the faint ripple of music has swelled into an immense wave of sound, filling the whole church and drowning the notes of the organ.

THE ORIE.

In the basement of the church is a panstereorama

In the basement of the church is a pansfereorama of Bethlehem, in which is prominently marked the stable and the manger, and over them hover angels hither and thither, like gossamer beings of another world. The mass was celebrated by Father Stone, assisted by Father's Searle and Elliott. The sermon was preached by the Rev. August M. Brady, who also read the Gospel which was from St. John.—"In the beginning the Word was God." The reverend gentleman's remarks went to show that Christ was no less God than man when He took upon Himself a perisnable body. He said that the Church which He had established was a sufficient proof to crush to atoms the fallacies and sophistres of psilanthropists and atheists. When God sent His only begotten Son among men He gave fo them

THE PANACEA FOR THEM ALLMENTS.

God might have cleansed the world from all its sins without sending His Son among us in the shape of man, or when He had done so He could have cleansed us without having Him spill His precious blood. But no! He wished to give us an example of humility in suffering, charity among haters and obedience to God's will, which might be held up for emulation to generations until the end of time. And this example we have in the birth, life and death of Christ, who, on a cold, dreary night, just 1,872 years age, came into this world of sorrow and suffering to redeem fallen, obduriate man from his errors, and open to him the gates of the Eternal City, where you are invited to join Him for an eternity of time. Then take Christ tor your model, and His humility in becoming man will not have been without the effect. May you all live to celebrate the Redeemer's birthday for many years to come, and at the end emerge to a better world where Christmas is eternal.

TRINITY CHURCH.

Appropriate Decorations - Music and Prayer Upon the Day of the Christian

purposes of worship Trinity church was crowded with ladies and gentlemen eager to witness the imposing ceremonies with which the day is here crowned. The naves and chancel were richly decorated with evergreens, and through the stained glass in the western end, behind the altar, the light stole in slender shafts of myriad colors upon the foliage, giving it the appearance of being clustered with berries and fruit and garlanded with flowers. Bands of choristers in white surplices were ranged on each side of the communion table, and in the distance appeared the deacons, the sub-deacons and the chapel master. The organ to the left and immediately behind the reader's desk was responded to by the great one at the east end of the edifice, where the orchestra was also placed. Programmes, richly printed

IN GOLD AND COLORS,
were distributed in the seats, and by the time the first plece, the "Processional," was finished, there was not a vacant place for standing in either aisle nor in the open space at the vestibule. After the "Processional," "Christians, Awake, Salute the Happy Morn," hymn 42, "Come, All Ye Faithful," the "Kyrie" and the "Nicene Creed" (second mass) were given. The other music rendered was an offertory "Benedictus," Sanctus (second mass) "Agnus Del" (second mass) and "Gloria in Excelsis" (second mass).

"HABK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING." glass in the western end, behind the aitar, the light

"Agnus Dei" (second mass) and "Gioria in Excelsis" (second mass).

"HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING," though not the most profoundly devotional piece of music performed, was resonant with an admirable sentiment, and poetical to the last degree. So deeply touching was it that many of the worshippers' eyes were suffused with tears.

"Christ was born," said the rector, "for the good of all alike. Not for Protestants, not for Catholics, but for all men. God hath created all men of one blood. All the earth shall rejoice in Him, and upon this Christmas day, most strongly are they exhorted to forget or heal old bitternesses and to unite in the broadest and deepest brotherly love. To-day fulfil the command of the Saviour to all mankind, "in your repoicing love one another." This annual commemoration of the greatest event in the history of humanity is full of the most sublime and beautiful of sentiments. Should we not on this, our Saviour's birthday, make our peace with all men, and give our souls to God? Let us here to day renew our promises we have all made in times gone by, to give our hearts to the Lord. God bless you all, brethren. God keep you all forever, and giory be to the Highest now and forevermore.

After the conclusion of the services members of the church went forward and partook of the communion.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL.

Christmas Decorations and Ceremonies-A Pontifical High Mass-Brilliant Renditions by the Choir and Organist-Sermon by the Rev. Father Ronayne, S. J.—Reflections on the Nativity of the Saviour.

Whatever there is in religion truly indicative of real praise, gratitude, sacrifice and love was certainly visible yesterday at the Roman Catholic Cathedral of this city. Everything within the stately and hallowed temple presented a uniform neatness of aspect and glittered, as it were, in the sunshine and gladness of the important event which was being commemorated beneath its roof. Though a crowded congregation was in attendance all seemed comfortably situated, and evidently disposed to spend the pious Christmas hour as profitably as possible. The sanctuary, high alters and side alters were richly and profusely decorated with all kinds of floral offerings, natural and strikely and kinds of floral offerings, natural and artificial, and evergreens of every description. In the sanctuary were present the Most Rev. Archbishop McCloskey, officiating as celebrant of

THE GRAND PONTIFICAL HIGH MASS; the Very Rev. Dr. Starrs, assistant priest. Deacons of honor—The Rev. Fathers McNames and Kane. fasters of ceremonies—Rev. Fathers Farrelly and Kearney.

THE SACRED MUSIC of the mass was by Mandanici. Mr. Gustavus Schmitz presided at the organ in a manner worthy of praise, remembrance and imitation. The choir, which consisted of a full chorus of thirty-five voices and four solo singers, was presided over by Mr. Henry Schmitz, with much spirit and evidences of sufficient experience and courage. After the preliminary part of the mass was silently repeated by the Archishop, the beautiful "Kyrie" peated forth from the choir and organ with tones full of sweetness which told most effectively upon every ear. The "Gloria in Excessis Deo" followed, and as a grand thankagiving hymn of praise was most elegantly rendered. At the Gradusi, Mr. Urch's, baseo, sang the "Adeete Fidelis," the "Venite Adoremus" of which was given in fall chorus by the choir, and as the appropriate Christmas hymn, may be said to have been one of the most appealing renditions of the selection. Before the sermon the "Veni Creator," a solo quartet, by G. Schmitz, was pathetically rendered. At the Offertory was sung by Madame Chome one of the sweetest and most entrancing hymns of the Church's liturgy, the "Quam Dilectu," by Mercadante, a soprano solo with chorus. This, with the "O Salutaris Hostis" by Abt, sung by Mrs. Unger, a truly gitted tady, concluded the estimable and brilliant efforts of St. Patrick's choir yesterday. hmitz presided at the organ in a manner worthy by Act, sung by Mrs. Unger, a truly glited lady, concluded the estimable and brilliant efforts of St. Patrick's choir yesterday.

Before the "Credo," winch, it is well to state, was noticeably impressive in its magnificent rendering, and espocially so on visitors of other rendering senominations who were in attendance, the Rev. Father Ronayne, S. J., of St. Francis Xavier's College, ascended the pulpit to preach THE SERMON, which was culled from the nativity of Christ, the great event in commemoration. The reverend preacher chose his text frem the Gospel of the day, Luke Xi., 15, 20.

The advent of Christ, the preacher sald, was an event which was expected for four thousand years before the birth of the Savionr. As that eventual moment approached nearer and nearer when the words of the prophets were to be fulfilled there was

words of the prophets were to be fulfilled there was

JOY IN THE HEARTS OF ALL
in expectation of some wonderful king who should come upon earth clothed in majesty and power. But Bethiehem robed, not in the splendor and magnificence of royalty and beauty, but wrapped in lowimess and wretchedness, procedured to the three Magi quite a contrary scene to that pictured in the imaginations of the multitude. Some there were who rejused to believe that Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary of Nazareth, was not the Messiah on this account. But who were they that they should attempt to criticise the grave and uniathomable attributes of the God-man, or question the will of His eternal Father?

CHRIST'S OBJECT IN COMING ON EARTH was the redemption of mankind. Man, of himself, was unable to cancel sin, by which divine justice.

was cutraged. The atonement of creatures was insufficient. The offence was that of a creature against the Creator. No punishment could satisf for a transgression se proportionately great say that of a God. Hence it is that Jesus Christassume

human form and condescended to appears the anger of his Father by suffering and dying upon a cross for all mankind.

CHRIST WAS CONCEIVED in the word of her to-day by whom all things were made, the eternal and second person of the adorable Trinity, and Mary, the Virgin, is His mother, not only of his humanity, but size of the whan individual child, who is dod and man; who unites in His own divine person the divine and human natures, and in such a manner as to make one-complete and inseparable and eternal being. St. John, speaking in his first chapter and GOING INTO THE REALMS OF ETERNITY in his inspired thoughts, says that Jesus Christ is God. St. Matthew, in the first chapter of his Gospel, tells us also that Mary is the mother of Jesus; therefore it is a revealed truth that Mary is the mother of God.

After thus proving the divine maternity of the Bleazed Virgin the picacher drew avivid picture of THE STATE OF SOCIETY immediately previous to the birth of Christ and during His reign. Ambition and vice of the basest sort had eaten the hearts of men. The poor and the humble were trodden upon, morality was nothing more than a systematized hypocrisy, and truth was nowhere respected. Christ came to overturn this state of things and to build up the DIVINS STRUCTURE OF CHRISTIANITY upon their ruins. This structure was no other than His Church, into which He breathed by his divine power the spirit of faith, hope and charity, and which he continued to preserve until to-day, and will continue to watch over forever. Her foundation is built upon His eternal Word, which can hever pass away, and, faithul to that divine commission which He entrusted to her, in her every struggle she has never been known to yield.

After the conclusion of the mass celebration, which was in every part carried out according to the litary of the Church, and performed in that becoming, humble manner which seems peculiar even to the consecrated prelate who officiated, the Most Reverend Archbishop gave the Papai benediction to the large congregatio

At half-past three o'clock P. M. solemn vespers were sung in a beautiful and touching manner, the choir of the morning being punctually in at tendance.

ST. STEPHEN'S OHURCH.

church, in Twenty-eighth street, with great splen-

The Decorations-Splendid Musicmons by the Rev. Dr. McGlyan-Crowds of Christmas Worshippers. Christmas was celebrated at St. Stephen's

dor. From early morning until evening the ser-vices were continued. The church itself was splendidly decorated. On former festival occa-sions the services had been conducted with great pomp and ceremony; yesterday there seemed to be a festival air about the church, the result of a cination of influences. The magnificent alters were decorated with great taste, and though there was a profusion of flowers everywhere visible yet everything so fitted its place, and the ornamental additions were in themselves so beautiful, that the scene was exquisitely rich and harmonious. There was no crowding of candelabrums on the alters, and yet there was a full illumination of the sanctuary, tinted by the mellowed light that came through the stained glass windows. Evergreens, firs and bouquets were scattered here and there; bouquets of flowers filled niches near the altars; the white marble pilasters and the higher parts of the altars were gracefully entwined with green leaves and ro es. Bromide's beautiful painting of leaves and ro es. Bromide's beautiful painting of the Mother of Jesus, over the Virgin's attar, was handsomely framed with green leaves; the picture over St. Joseph's aftar was in the same setting, and the picture of the Saviour, which is hung on the epistic side of the sanctuary, had its gorgeous frame concealed with flowers. The fronts of the galleries in the transepts were festooned with laurel and fir, the panels being ornamented with acrosses and other emblems. Around the fronts of the principal galleries festoons of green leaves were hung, and from cap to cap of the pillars a graceful series of looped strings of hem.ock and laurel extended around. But all this bright and pleasant picture was in contrast with the humble little crib which stood near the Virgin's aftar, its roof thatched with straw.

thatched with straw.

The music at the solemn high mass was especially grand. The most irreligious of men could scarcely have heard Mozart's splendid "Tweifth Mass," as it was rendered at this church yesterday, and not have heard Mozart's splendid "Twelfth Mass," as it was rendered at this church yesterday, and not have felt some longings for the celestial harmonies which are believed to be the never-ending delight of the blest. Danforth, the organist, deserves no small praise for the manner in which he presented this mass, even though he had the aid of a full orchestra and some thirty additional singers. There were parts of the mass which were inspiring from the mingle? religious emotions of the hour, the conceptions of the composer and the truthiul and artistic rendering of the music by the singers. It is unnecessary to speak of the many brilliancies of the composition, for the mass has long been adjudged an almost unapproachable effort. Besides the mass, however, a few pieces were sung, the great oil hymn, the "Adeste Fideles," which was given without the change of a note, in that familiar air that was sung yesterday, all the world over, in the imagined presence of the infant in the crib. Danforth's arrangement for the hymn was, in point of taste and appreciation of the sentiment, worthy of the occasion. In the atternoon Mercadante's "Vespers" were sung. At the vespers the church presented a most imposing appearance. At any hour the sanctuary of this church strikes the eye as massive, rich and costly; but when the church is lit up by gas and the numberless candles on the altars the effect is still greater, and there is a something of awe imposing appearance. At any hour the sanctuary of this church strikes the eye as massive, rich and costly; but when the church is lit up by gas and the numberless candles on the altars the effect is still greater, and there is a something of awe created in the mind of the visitor, as his soul is stirred by the continued flow of joyful or pathetic music, by the various religious cymbals, and, above all, by the solemuity of the service and the evidently deep devotion of the numberless crowds that fill the church in every part. The Christmas hymn, the "Adeste Fideles," was again sung at the vespers with even better effect than at the high mass. The singers were Miss Howson and Mrs. Wiegand, sopranes; Miss Munier, Miss Kohmann and Miss Coney, contraitos; Mr. Bernbard and Mr. Demacht, tenors; Mr. Colletti and Mr. Flick, bassos. The chorus was from St. Stephen's Musical Association. Miss Coney will in future belong to the regular choir of St. Stephen's, and, judging from her excellent signing yesterday and her accomplishments as a musician, she will prove a valuable addition.

From the first high mass, at half-past four o'clock in the morning, which was celebrated by the Rev. Pather McCready, until that at half-past ten o'clock, the church was literally packed with worshippers. Masses were said every hour or half hour between the first mass and the solemn high mass, which began at half-past ten o'clock, and at which the Rev. Pather Flynn was celebrant, the Rev. Father McCready deacon and the Rev. Father Lynch sub-deacon.

After the first gospet of the first high mass Rev. Dr. McGlynn preached an eloquent sermon from the gospel of the mass. As this congregation was to a great extent composed of the working classes, the sermon was particularly beautiful, for this preacher is always best when speaking out freely the thoughts of his own mind to those he loves the best, who are the very poorest of the poor. At the solemn high mass, which began at half-past it oolock, Dr. McGlynn preached again, this time delivering a beau

ST. PRANCIS XAVIER'S CHURCH. Haydn's Imperial Mass-Sermon by Rev. Father Daiy, S. J. This beautiful little church was crowded to

suffocation at High Mass yesterday. The decora-Mass was celebrated by Rev. Father Hudon, President of the College and Church of St. Francis Xavier, assisted by Rev. Fathers Cazeau and Cassidy. The mass was Haydn's No. 3 (imperial), which is as well known and as popular as the twelfth mass of Mozart. It was performed by the following ladies and gentiemen:—Misses Teresa and Mary Werneke, Signori Tamaro and Bacelli, and a large and efficient chorus and a well trained orenestra, supplied by Mr. F. Eben. Dr. William Berge officients as organist and conductor and brought the mass through successfully. At the Offertory the brilliant arrangement of "Adeste Fideles," by Berge, was given with rare effect. The orchestra and organ played a march before the mass and the overture to "Masaniello" at the conclusion of the services. Rev. Father Daly, S. J., preached at the gospel a very eloquent sermon on the great festival, alluding to the general expectation of the Messiah prevalent at the time that the star of Bethlehem appeared, the resiolings of the angels and the shepherds, the lessons to be derived from the circumstances of the birth of the Redeemer and the great boon conferred upon mankind by the redemption. The Misses Werneke sang the solo, soprane and contraits parts of the mass with remarkable expression and power. In the evening Generalis "Veapora" were sung, with Barbieri's beautiful "Tantum Ergo;" Lambilotte's Christmas crutorio, "Pastores Erunt;" Mozart's "Ave Verum," and Alma "Redemptoris," by Berge.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHARITIES.

The Howard Mission.

Practical Christianity made itself manifest vesterday at the above Mission, in the New Bowery. The grand red-letter day of the Christian year was celeorated with a gleesomeness that found its way to the hearts of about seven hundred children, and the joys thereof were shared by a number of the workers of the institution and witnessed by suc-